

Message Text

PAGE 01 STATE 061843

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S/S - MR. ORTIZ

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TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REPORT - WEDNESDAY MORNING, MARCH 19

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

NO. 33

SUMMARY: HAK ARRIVES RIYADH. ISRAELI CABINET GOES INTO SESSION. HAK WITHHOLDING SHUTTLE PLANS. GAP BETWEEN TWO SIDES WIDE. HAK EXPRESSES REGRETS HE NEGOTIATED VIET-NAM PEACE AGREEMENT.

WIRES:

1. UPI - HAK TOOK OFF FOR SAUDI ARABIA TODAY, GIVING ISRAEL MORE TIME TO CONSIDER ITS NEXT MOVE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS TOWARD A NEW SINAI DESERT TROOP WITHDRAWAL AGREEMENT WITH EGYPT.

BEFORE HE LEFT, HAK MET WITH PM RABIN AND ISRAELI NEGOTIATORS TO GET THEIR RESPONSE TO EGYPTIAN PROPOSALS HE BROUGHT BACK TUESDAY FROM ASWAN.

THE ISRAELI CABINET WENT INTO SESSION AT 11 AM TO DRAW UP THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE AND HOPED TO COMPLETE ITS UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 STATE 061843

DELIBERATIONS BY THE TIME HAK RETURNED IN THE EVENING.

HAK PLANNED TO BRIEF KING FAISAL ON THE PROGRESS OF HIS

ISRAELI-EGYPTIAN NEGOTIATIONS.

THE SECRETARY DENIED THE TALKS WERE DEADLOCKED. HE SAID EGYPT AND ISRAEL ARE EXAMINING EACH OTHER'S POSITIONS "AND IN THAT SENSE WE ARE MAKING PROGRESS."

"I THINK THERE ARE SOME AREAS OF AGREEMENT AND THERE ARE SEVERAL SUBSTANTIAL AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT," HAK SAID.

2. AP (SCHWEID) - HAK INTERRUPTED HIS NEGOTIATIONS WITH ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN LEADERS TODAY FOR A COURTESY CALL ON KING FAISAL.

THE SECRETARY FLEW TO RIYADH AFTER A 90-MINUTE MEETING WITH PREMIER RABIN AND HIS NEGOTIATING TEAM. THE SEMIOFFICIAL ISRAELI STATE RADIO REPORTED THAT THE PREMIER THEN CALLED A CABINET MEETING TO REPORT ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS.

WITH HIS LATEST ROUND OF SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY IN ITS 14TH DAY, HAK TOLD NEWSMEN HIS TALKS WERE GOING "VERY WELL." BUT PUBLIC STATEMENTS FROM BOTH ISRAEL AND EGYPT HAVE SHOWN NO MOVEMENT TOWARD A COMPROMISE ON BASIC ISSUES IN DISPUTE.

HAK IS SAID TO BE WITHHOLDING "SHUTTLE" PLANS BEYOND THE NEXT COUPLE OF DAYS UNTIL HE PICKS UP THE CABINET'S COUNTERPROPOSALS TO SADAT'S UNDISCLOSED "SPECIFIC IDEAS AND CONSIDERATIONS."

WITHOUT DIVULGING DETAILS, U.S. OFFICIALS ABOARD HAK'S JET SAID THE GAP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES REMAINS WIDE ALTHOUGH ISRAEL IS GIVING SADAT'S VIEWS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION.

ASKED WHETHER ISRAEL AND EGYPT WERE TRYING TO COMPROMISE THEIR DIFFERENCES, A SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIAL UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 STATE 061843

REPLIED: "ABSOLUTELY."

HAK'S CALL ON FAISAL IS DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO BRING HIS INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON SYRIA, WHOSE CAPACITY FOR UPSETTING THE ALREADY WAVERING NEGOTIATIONS IS ALWAYS ON HAK'S MIND.

FAISAL'S INFLUENCE ON EGYPT IS NOT CONSIDERED SO PERVERSIVE, ALTHOUGH IF HE CHOSE TO OPPOSE THE MISSION IT COULD BE DISRUPTIVE.

3. UPI - HAK HAS EXPRESSED REGRETS THAT HE NEGOTIATED THE VIET-NAM PEACE AGREEMENT FOR THE U.S. IN THE LIGHT OF

CONGRESSIONAL RELUCTANCE TO PROVIDE MILITARY AID TO THE COUNTRY, U.S. OFFICIALS SAID TODAY.

THE OFFICIALS DID NOT QUOTE HAK BUT THEY SAID HE HAS CONCEDED THAT HE WOULD NEVER HAVE NEGOTIATED THE PEACE AGREEMENT IN GOOD CONSCIENCE IF HE HAD FORESEEN CONGRESS' RELUCTANCE TO PROVIDE WHAT HE CONSIDERS ENOUGH AID TO SOUTH VIET-NAM.

THEY SAID THE SECRETARY IS ALSO KNOWN TO BELIEVE THAT THE DEBATE OVER AID TO CAMBODIA IS AN INVITATION FOR THE NORTH VIETNAMESE TO LAUNCH A RENEWED OFFENSIVE IN NEIGHBORING SOUTH VIET-NAM. ...

U.S. OFFICIALS TRAVELING WITH HAK ON HIS CURRENT ME PEACE MISSION CITED AN ARTICLE RECENTLY PUBLISHED IN NORTH VIET-NAM SAYING THAT THIS YEAR SHOULD BE A YEAR OF MAXIMUM EFFORT BECAUSE AMERICAN INDECISION AND AID CUTS MADE THE U.S. INCAPABLE OF INTERVENING ON SOUTH VIET-NAM'S BEHALF.

RADIO/TV:

1. TED KOPPEL, AM AMERICA - THE WINTER IN ASWAN THESE DAYS IS BEAUTIFUL AND THE SETTING OF PRESIDENT SADAT'S REST HOUSE IS SCENIC WHICH MAY BE SOME SMALL CONSOLATION TO HAK AND PRESIDENT SADAT WHO CAN STILL EXPECT TO SEE A LOT OF EACH.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 04 STATE 061843

SECRETARY: I'M DETERMINED TO STAY UNTIL WE EITHER REACH AN AGREEMENT OR IT IS CLEAR WE CANNOT REACH AN AGREEMENT, SO I'M DETERMINED TO STAY.

KOPPEL: WHEN PRESIDENT SADAT WAS ASKED YESTERDAY WHETHER AN AGREEMENT REMAINS WITHIN THE REALM OF POSSIBILITY HE IN EFFECT TOSSED THE BALL BACK INTO ISRAEL'S COURT.

PRESIDENT SADAT: I CAN ANSWER YOUR QUESTION ON THURSDAY, LET US HOPE, WHEN DR. KISSINGER RETURNS.

KOPPEL: IT DEPENDS, IN OTHER WORDS, ON WHAT HAK HEARD LAST NIGHT WHEN HE MET WITH THE ISRAELI NEGOTIATING TEAM IN JERUSALEM. IT IS A DANGEROUS AND POTENTIALLY ENDLESS GAME THIS EXERCISE OF WAITING FOR THE OTHER SIDE TO MAKE THE NEXT CONCESSION. AT THE MOMENT IT DOES NOT LOOK GOOD, BUT HAK STILL INSISTS IT'S POSSIBLE.

2. DICK VALERIANI, NBC, TODAY - ON HIS THIRD VISIT TO ASWAN, HAK WAS HOPING TO SPEED-UP THE PACE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS BUT AFTER HE AND PRESIDENT SADAT CONFERRED ON THE EGYPTIAN RESPONSE TO THE LATEST ISRAELI

NEGOTIATING SUGGESTIONS NEITHER MAN GAVE ANY INDICATION OF SIGNIFICANT PROGRESS.

SECRETARY: ONE CANNOT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS SPEAK OF ANY PARTICULAR POINT IN WHICH THERE IS A BREAKTHROUGH. I'M TRYING TO NARROW THE GAP BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES BY EXPLAINING THE IDEAS AS CAREFULLY AS I CAN. AS I HAVE SAID ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS THE GAP HAS NARROWED BUT IT ALWAYS REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER IT CAN FINALLY BE CLOSED.

VALERIANI: HAK THEN CAME BACK TO ISRAEL TO REPORT ON HIS TALKS IN EGYPT. HE PLANS TO RETURN TO ASWAN ON THURSDAY. THE NEXT EXCHANGE OF IDEAS SHOULD DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT AN AGREEMENT IS POSSIBLE. AND WHILE HAK DOES NOT ANTICIPATE SUSPENDING THE NEGOTIATIONS AND RETURNING TO WASHINGTON, AS SOME ISRAELI NEWSPAPERS HAVE SPECULATED, HE DOES NOT RULE IT OUT.

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 05 STATE 061843

3. DALLAS TOWNSEND, CBS WORLD NEWS ROUNDUP - HAK MET AGAIN THIS MORNING WITH PM RABIN AND THEN HE FLEW OFF TO SAUDI ARABIA FOR A CHAT WITH KING FAISAL. MARVIN KALB REPORTS THAT BY THE TIME HAK RETURNS TO ISRAEL TONIGHT THE ISRAELI CABINET WILL HAVE MET AND PRESUMABLY REACHED AGREEMENT ON A NEW PROPOSAL FOR THE SECRETARY TO TAKE TO EGYPT TOMORROW. A PROPOSAL KALB SAYS, "DESIGNED TO BREAK THE BACK OF THE DEADLOCKED NEGOTIATIONS."

KALB: HAK GAVE THE ISRAELIS PRESIDENT SADAT'S LATEST THINKING SHORTLY AFTER HIS RETURN TO JERUSALEM LAST NIGHT. IT PRODUCED QUICKLY A GLOOMY ATMOSPHERE ISRAELI OFFICIALS SAYING THEY THINK SADAT HAS "HARDENED HIS LINE." THERE IS NO AGREEMENT YET ON THE THREE BASIC ISSUES IN THIS NEGOTIATION. ISRAEL WANTS SADAT TO ACCEPT THE IDEA OF NON-BELLIGERENCY -- HE DOES NOT, NOT YET. ISRAEL WANTS THE AREA SHE IS BEING ASKED TO EVACUATE TO BE DEMILITARIZED, TO BE NO LONGER A SOURCE OF MILITARY CONTENTION. SADAT WANTS ONLY A THIN BUFFER ZONE BETWEEN THE TWO ARMIES. FINALLY, ISRAEL WANTS THE UN POLICING UNIT TO HAVE AN INDEFINITE MANDATE; EGYPT IS READY FOR A ONE YEAR MANDATE OFFICIALLY, A SECOND YEAR UNOFFICIALLY. THE ISRAELIS WANT WHAT DM PEREZ CALLED, "REAL MOVES NOT WORDS." FOR WORDS HE SAID, WE HAVE THE BIBLE AND THEY HAVE THE KORAN.

NEWSPAPERS

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, NYTIMES, GWERTZMAN, PAGE 5, JERUSALEM: ...LATER ABOARD HAK'S PLANE FLYING TO ISRAEL, NEWSMEN WERE TOLD THAT ONCE A NEW SINAI AGREEMENT WAS REACHED SADAT MIGHT TAKE SOME

"ALLEVIATING" STEPS, BUT THAT THOSE SUBJECTS WERE NOT NOW PRIME ISSUES BETWEEN ISRAEL AND EGYPT.

NEWSMEN WERE TOLD THAT HAK HAD BEEN TRYING TO WORK OUT A DOCUMENT THAT FELL SOMEWHERE BETWEEN HIGHLY POLITICAL NON-BELLIGERENCY PLEDGE ORIGINALLY SOUGHT BY ISRAEL AND PURELY MILITARY DISENGAGEMENT DOCUMENT SOUGHT BY EGYPT UNDER WHICH ISRAEL WOULD GIVE UP MITLA AND GIDI
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 06 STATE 061843

PASSES AND ABU RUDEIS OIL FIELDS.

IN HAK'S VIEW, THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD INCLUDE LANGUAGE AND DETAILS MAKING MORE PERMANENT CURRENT CEASEFIRE, SUCH AS DEFINITE LONG TIME PERIOD SOUGHT BY ISRAELIS, STRENGTHENING OF U. N. BUFFER ZONE FORCE, AND MUTUAL DECLARATIONS NOT TO LAUNCH ATTACKS OR WAR AGAINST EACH OTHER. DOCUMENT WOULD BE STRONGER THAN JANUARY 1974 SINAI DISENGAGEMENT ACCORD, WHICH PLEDGED BOTH SIDES TO ABIDE BY CEASE-FIRE.

AMERICAN OFFICIALS SAID THAT MAIN DISAGREEMENTS CENTER NOT SO MUCH ON SUBSTANCE OF PROPOSED ACCORD, AS ON MANNER IN WHICH IT IS CARRIED OUT. THUS, HAK BELIEVES THAT IF SADAT AND RABIN WERE EACH ASKED TO WRITE DOWN THEIR IDEAS ON WHAT ACCORD SHOULD CONTAIN, THEY WOULD COME UP WITH SIMILAR VIEWS, BUT WOULD DIFFER ON HOW TO PUT THEM INTO AN AGREEMENT....

AMERICAN OFFICIALS NOW BELIEVE THAT BY END OF THIS WEEK, THEY WILL KNOW WHETHER AN AGREEMENT CAN BE REACHED. MOST TOP U. S., ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS BELIEVE THAT AN AGREEMENT IS MORE LIKELY THAN NOT, BUT ALL FEAR THAT IT MAY PROVE TOO RISKY POLITICALLY FOR EITHER EGYPT OR ISRAEL TO MAKE NECESSARY COMPROMISE.

2. WASHPOST, BERGER, SECTION II, JERUSALEM: HAK SAID TODAY THAT "SEVERAL SUBSTANTIAL AREAS OF DISAGREEMENT" REMAIN BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL BUT HE IS CONTINUING HIS DIPLOMATIC SHUTTLING IN BELIEF THAT AN ACCORD IS STILL POSSIBLE...

...SADAT TOLD REPORTERS THAT HE COULD MAKE JUDGMENT THURSDAY, WHEN HAK RETURNS, WHETHER A NEW AGREEMENT CAN BE CONCLUDED. EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT THUS SUGGESTED THAT NEGOTIATIONS HAVE REACHED A DECISIVE STAGE.

REPORTERS TRAVELING TO ISRAEL WITH HAK TODAY WERE TOLD THAT TALKS ARE NOW AT A POINT WHERE STOCK HAS TO BE TAKEN OVER PERIOD OF DAYS. HAK HAS SAID HE WILL REMAIN IN REGION EITHER UNTIL AN ACCORD IS COMPLETED OR UNTIL IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT AN ACCORD IS NOT POSSIBLE.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 07 STATE 061843

HIS INTENTION TO STAY FOR SOME TIME WAS INDICATED WHEN HE BROUGHT IN A NEW TEAM OF SECRETARIES.

INCREASINGLY, THEME IS EMERGING THAT CONSEQUENCES OF FAILURE CAN BE VERY SERIOUS, WHILE REWARDS OF SUCCESS CAN BE GREAT. IT IS APPARENT THAT HAK SAYS THIS TO LEADERS ON BOTH SIDES.

...ISRAELIS, WHO ARE HOLDING OUT FOR A CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENT BY SADAT ON ENDING EGYPT'S STATE OF WAR, HAVE BEEN SAYING THAT IF CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS FAIL, TALKS COULD MOVE TO GENEVA.

BUT TOP ISRAELI OFFICIALS ADMIT THAT THEY ARE FACING AN EXTRAORDINARILY DIFFICULT PROBLEM. AN ACCORD THAT DOES NOT MEET THEIR PRINCIPAL DEMANDS COULD PROVOKE A DOMESTIC POLITICIAL CRISIS WHILE AT SAME TIME LEAVING COUNTRY IN A LESS ADVANTAGEOUS STRATEGIC POSITION IF REGION DOES NOT MOVE TOWARD PEACE....

CONTENTION ABOARD HAK PLANE IS THAT EGYPTIANS WOULD BE PREPARED TO TAKE SOME STEPS PROVIDED THAT THEY ARE NOT DISCUSSED PUBLICLY--THAT WOULD CONSTITUTE DE FACTO ALLEVIA-TION OF STATE OF BELLIGERENCE.

3. NY DAILY NEWS, CARTER, ASWAN: ...IT IS END OF THEIR LATEST ROUND OF TALKS AT SADAT'S VILLA OVERLOOKING UPPER NILE... REPORTERS AND PHOTOGRAPHERS FROM DOZEN NATIONS CRAM INTO SMALL ROOM, EAGER TO TAKE PICTURES AND ASK QUESTIONS.

SADAT ANSWERS EVERY QUESTION WITH GREAT POLitenESS, EVEN LOADED ONES FROM REPORTERS WHOSE PRO-ISRAELI SYMPATHIES ARE APPARENT. HAK SOMETIMES BRISTLES AT QUESTIONING.

THERE ARE HINTS ON HAK'S PLANE THAT HAK THINKS THAT QUESTIONING IS TOO HARD, THAT REPORTERS ACCOMPANYING HIM ARE POURING FUEL ON DIPLOMATIC FLAMES BY DEMANDING YES OR NO ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS THAT FORCE SADAT TO REPEAT A HARD PUBLIC LINE.
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 08 STATE 061843

AT LEAST SOME AMERICAN OFFICIALS WOULD LIKE TO CUT OUT PRESS CONFERENCES DURING PRESENT, DELICATE PHASE OF HAK'S SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY. SADAT SEEMS TO LIKE SESSIONS, AND SO ANOTHER ONE WAS HELD TODAY, WITH MORE TOUGH QUESTIONS.

4. BALT SUN, MILLS, PAGE 11, JERUSALEM: EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI PEACE TALKS MOVED INTO A CRITICAL PHASE YESTERDAY, WITH

ISRAEL PUBLICLY DEMANDING EGYPT MAKE REAL MOVES TOWARD
POLITICAL RAPPROCHEMEAT AND EGYPT INSISTING IT IS TOO
EARLY FOR SUCH GESTURES...

...AMERICAN OFFICIALS ARE STILL SAYING IT IS TOO EARLY
TO PREDICT OUTCOME OF HAK MISSION, ALREADY 10 DAYS OLD
OR EVEN HOW MUCH LONGER IT WILL TAKE.

CRUX OF PROBLEM, CLEARLY, IS FINDING FORMULA TO SATISFY
ISRAELI DEMAND FOR FIRM AND PUBLIC INDICATIONS BY
EGYPT THAT THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT ONLY BRING AN END
TO HOSTILITIES BUT ALSO A BEGINNING TOWARD MORE NORMAL
RELATIONS...

ISRAEL, PERES SAID, IS DEMANDING POSITIVE CHANGE IN
EGYPT'S ATTITUDE, AND THAT IS POINT ON WHICH TALKS ARE
NOW CENTERED. BOTH ISRAELIS AND AMERICAN OFFICIALS
HAVE DECLINED TO SAY PUBLICLY WHAT SPECIFICALLY ISRAEL
IS ASKING.

BUT ISRAELIS ARE KNOWN GENERALLY TO WANT EGYPT TO DROP
OUT OF ARAB PROPAGANDA AND ECONOMIC CAMPAIGN AGAINST
ISRAEL AND TO TAKE SOME TENTATIVE STEPS TO EASE COMMER-
CIAL AND COMMUNICATIONS BARRIERS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES.

SADAT...SAYS CONCRETE MOVES TOWARDS CONCILIATION SHOULD
BE DISCUSSED ONLY AT GENEVA AS PART OF FINAL ME PEACE
SETTLEMENT.

HE STATED THAT POSITION YESTERDAY IN UNUSUALLY SHARP
TERMS WHEN HE AND HAK TALKED TO REPORTERS AFTER THEIR
MORNING MEETING. INGERSOLL

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